

Downtown Business District
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 27, 2015
330 Main Street, Middletown, CT

Attendees

Diane Gervais (Chair)	Sean Moriarty (Police Department)
Jennifer Alexander (Commissioner)	Cathy Duncan (Chamber of Commerce)
Valerie Scribano (Commissioner)	Geen Thazhampallath (Parking)
Mike DiPiro (Commissioner)	Tom Marano (Planning Department)
Tom Ford (Commissioner)	William Russo (Public Works)
Peter Harding (Commissioner)	Pamela Steele (Business Owner)
Marc Levin (Commissioner)	Sandra Russo-Driska (Business Owner)
Lisa Melaven (DBD Office)	Anne-Marie Cannata (Buttonwood Tree)

Minutes

- Motion made by Marc Levin to approve
- 2nd by Gary Nagler
- Minutes accepted.

Treasurer's Report – Mike DiPiro

Mike reports we are under budget at this time. As of April 2015 we have a cash balance of \$156,000 in our account and have received pretty much all of our funds from the City of Middletown. We are getting ready to make payments towards our Ad Campaign with Tag Team business partners. The budget is looking good, nothing out of the ordinary.

- Financials approved by Marc Levin
- 2nd
- Financials accepted by Gary Nagler

Maintenance Report – Tom Ford

Sidewalk sweeping has started, every Friday.

Tom unveiled the Hajjar project, which looks amazing and will be soon under way. It looks to be a 16 month project, to include a mix of 13- Studio's, 55 - 1 bedroom and 21 – 2 bedrooms. The monthly rate will be between \$1,300 to \$2,800.

Beautification – Diane Gervais

See Chair Update

Police Report – Sean Moriarty

There is a problem with the City of Middletown, where folks are not receiving the DBD emails. The IT department at City Hall is working diligently to rectify the situation. The parade and golf tournament were

successful. The police department was able to give \$4,000 to the YMCA kid's camp and \$1,500 to the wounded warriors. Sean sends out big thank you to all who participated.

The police department is aware and working with the pedestrian's bike riding on the sidewalks. They are assisting to keep folks from hanging around and moving along in front of businesses on Main Street. The police department is staying on top of the graffiti along Main Street.

- ❖ Wednesday, June 10th - Middletown's 18th Annual Cruise Night on Main, from 4:30 – 8:30pm
- ❖ Saturday, June 13th – Middletown Kids Health & Safety Day, from 11:00 – 3:00pm

A couple of downtown businesses have voiced their concerns with the lack of visibility of beat officers on Main Street. Sean Moriarity stated they are working with the daily officers on hand, in which one beat officer is assigned to administrative duties at the Superior Court building. If the officer should be needed on Main St., he is called out to the location. The breakdown is as follows:

- 60,000 people reside in the City of Middletown
- 113 Authorized Officers – 3 positions frozen at this time
- 16 – Assigned to days – minimum of 9 with vacations/time off
- 23 – Assigned to 4:00 – 12:00
- 16 – Assigned to midnights
- 6 – Districts - 2 beat officers assigned to days (1 North End and 1 South End) and 3 assigned to 4:00-12:00 (2 North End and 1 South End)

There are a number of flower planters being vandalized in front of businesses, and has been addressed.

Public Works – William Russo

There have been several trees planted around Middletown through Jane Harris from Urban Forestry Commission and the Garden Club. The cleanliness on Main Street including the parking lots are being kept up and looking good. There has been and will continue to be a lot road work going on throughout the City. The Canoe Club will be hosting a car show on Saturday, June 14th with the "Rt. 66 Cruiser". There will be four car shows scheduled throughout the summer months. The fireworks will be Friday July 3rd. This should be a busy and a good day/night for the Middletown businesses.

Parking Report - Geen Thazhampallath

The Arcade upper level parking lot is going to be closed this week including Saturday, for a State project.

The project should be completed by the end of June, and will be open intermittently.

The Park Mobile's rep and Geen will be visiting businesses along Main St., to roll out the new parking app.

The DBD will be inviting the rep to our Wednesday, June 24th meeting for a brief presentation on how the new app is going to work. This will be a positive experience for both retailers and restaurant owners, in parking downtown.

North End Report - Anne Marie Cannata/Buttonwood Tree

Everything seems to be going fairly well at the North end of Main Street with the exception of the beat officers being visible.

Planning – Tom Marano

The Mayor and Planning Department have been working with City departments, brokers and proposals in having an outside company take over the old Aetna site, by July/August.

Tom is organizing two separate meetings with retailers and restaurant owners to cross promote business downtown. Jen Alexander made a point of saying it may be a good idea once a month to have the full time/permanent staff of both retail businesses and restaurants get together and tour around Middletown via Mat Transit, in promoting business in the downtown area. He is also working on recruiting advertisements through the Planning and Conservation Department for the Middletown Guide.

Chamber of Commerce – Cathy Duncan

The Car Cruise night is gearing up and ready to go on Wednesday, June 10th.

During the end of May and month of June the Chamber of Commerce will be attending the grand and grand re-opening at the following businesses:

- Advanced Auto – Grand Opening
- EpiCafe – Grand Opening
- Jessica's Color Room – Grand re-opening
- National Paint & Wallpaper – Grand re-opening

The summer stroll in downtown Middletown for the MBA will be held on Thursday, June 25th from 5:00-7:00pm visiting Lan Chi Vietnamese Restaurant, ION Market, The Buttonwood Tree and Eli Cannon's. All Chamber members and their guests are welcome to participate in the stroll.

Chair Update – Diane Gervais

Brochures have been printed and Lisa has begun distributing them.

Gift Cards: The Hospital has had a change of heart and has purchased some.

I have continued to re-negotiate our credit card processing fees with Harbor Touch and have gotten it as low as it can get through them. At this point I think we should stay with them so that we don't incur more costs for machines, etc., though I am going to continue to monitor it monthly.

Office wall art should be installed within the next week.

Planters: We will change over to summer as the weather warrants, the pansies will begin to fade as summer approaches.

Guides: Lisa and I have created an updated job description, schedule and wages.

We are in the process of creating a press release article to hopefully generate some interest and some applicants. If anyone knows of anyone please encourage them to contact the office.

Advertising Campaign: The scripts were finalized and four commercials will be shot soon. Lisa and I visited the 12 businesses involved and some of the production people were in town to scout locations. They should be getting us headshots of the actors any time now.

Fall ideas: We need to begin discussing what other things we can do... It would be helpful to have more board involvement in actually getting things done.

We need to get more of our downtown business owners actively involved in creating a better downtown.

- Motion to adjourn by Marc Levin
- 2nd by Jen Alexander
- Approved